

The media has always served as the "fourth branch of government" in the United States and we need to trust the media to present the news in a fair and responsible way. Fox News networks and affiliates have already seriously eroded this proud history and turned their media holdings into propaganda outlets for the Bush Republican's (Thankfully not all Republicans are so easily duped!). We now have even more outrageous, illegal, efforts to influence the current electoral process by Sinclair Broadcasting. Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.